

Anytown Indiana 5-year Park and Recreation Master Plan

2008 To 2012

**A Comprehensive Master Plan by the Anytown Park Board
and the Anytown Parks and Recreation Department**

**Anytown Parks and Recreation Department
5555 Anytown Avenue
Anytown, IN 44444
(555) 555-1212
E-mail: Anytownparks@anytown.in.us
Website: www.anytown.in.us/parks**

**Anytown Parks and Recreation Department
5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan**

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**Anytown Parks and Recreation Department
5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan**

Introduction

The Anytown Indiana Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan is intended as a supplement to the “IDNR Planning Guidelines for Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plans”. Local-level planners and consultants suggested that having an example plan would be beneficial when creating a first-time plan, especially for in-house planners. The Anytown plan was created in response to that need. The following document is only one way to write a parks and recreation master plan. So long as your plan provides at least the minimum information requested in the IDNR Planning Guidelines for Parks and Recreation Master Plans, the format, style, and presentation of the plan is up to you. We welcome suggestions for changes and additions, and invite your comments. Please send all comments and suggestions to:

Greg Beilfuss
State and Community Outdoor Recreation Planner
IDNR-Outdoor Recreation
402 W. Washington Street, Room #W271
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2782
(317) 232-4071
gbeilfuss@dnr.IN.gov

Definition of the Planning Area

The planning area for the Anytown Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) is the same as the service area. The service area for the City of Anytown does not stop at the city limits, but includes a buffer area of rural land that extends about two miles from the city center. Past public input and user surveys have indicated that Anytown has a significant and important rural user population, even if those users do not contribute directly to the taxes gathered from the city residents to support recreation. Anytown Parks and Recreation remains committed to making our facilities and services available to anyone, regardless of resident status, ability to pay, or physical/mental ability.

Goals of the Plan

After much discussion, the Anytown Park Department staff and the Park Board have agreed on the following goals for the 5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan.

- Gather feedback and input from as diverse a group of Anytown residents as possible, and report it in an accurate manner.
- Use national recreation standards, combined with a careful needs analysis to create new priorities for parks and recreation in the city.
- Create a plan that is dynamic, and provides pertinent, useful information and guidance for the next five years in Anytown.
- Present the plan and gain its acceptance within Anytown communities
- Submit the master plan to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Outdoor Recreation, adhering to the required timeframe for a draft by January 15 and finalized plans by April 15, 2008
- Receive approval from IDNR for eligibility for application for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant programs.
- Use the plan as a springboard to apply for all applicable grants

The Park Board/Department

The Park Board

The Park Board was first created in 1972, and was re-established in 1987 according to the requirements of Indiana Code 36-10-3. Anytown has a four-member board that serves staggered four-year terms. The current Anytown Park Board is:

Jane Doe, Board President

1313 Hoosier Lane

Anytown, IN 44444

Term: Jan. 2nd, 2005 to Jan. 2nd, 2010

John Roe, Board Secretary

P.O. Box 13

Anytown, IN 44444

Term: Jan. 2nd, 2006 to Jan. 2nd, 2011

Harold Phipps

818 N. Hoosier Avenue

Anytown, IN 44444

Term: Jan. 2nd, 2009 to Jan. 2nd, 2013

Meredith Venturi

1391 Hoosier Landing

Anytown, IN 44444

Term: Jan. 2nd, 2008 to Jan. 2nd, 2012

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The Park Department

Park Office

The main office for the parks department is in the City Hall Annex, located at 5555 Anytown Avenue, Anytown. The phone is: (555) 555-1212. E-mail:

Anytownparks@anytown.in.us Website: www.anytown.in.us/parks

Mission

- The Mission of the Anytown Parks and Recreation Department is: “To provide a superior recreation and park experience to all members of the Anytown community, creating a better quality of life, access to the outdoors, and opportunity for play of all kinds for all ages and abilities.”

Park Board’s Departmental Vision and Goals for the Next Five Years

- The Anytown Parks and Recreation Department will offer a level of service appropriate to the size and growth of the community.
- The Department will provide new opportunities for exercise, fitness and wellness for the community at large.
- The Department should act as a central part of daily life in the community, providing a city identity and a focus for the people of Anytown.

Staff

Park Superintendent: Pat Schmo

Hired: May 15th, 1997.

Recreation Director/Volunteer coordinator: Chris What

Hired: December 1st, 2000.

Maintenance Supervisor: Terry Who

Hired: February 14th, 1998.

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The Anytown Parks and Recreation Department also employs one full-time park staff person, two part-time maintenance staff, and approximately five seasonal employees each year.

Volunteers

In these times of shrinking budgets, rising energy costs and increasing recreation demand, volunteers from Anytown and the surrounding areas provide us with invaluable assistance by leading programs, coaching and officiating youth sports, assisting us in maintaining and improving the parks themselves, and much more. Without our dedicated group of volunteers we would not be able to provide the quality of parks and programs that we currently enjoy. Our current pool of volunteers varies between 50 and 100 people from all walks of life, and every level of the social strata. The Department invites all interested persons to participate in our parks volunteer system; please contact Chris What, Volunteer Coordinator at 555-1212 for more information.

Friends of the Anytown Parks

The Anytown Parks and Recreation Department has benefited tremendously from the creation of the 'Friends of Anytown Parks' group in 1994, and their 'Anytown Park Fund' under the Anytown Community Foundation. Many of our volunteers come to us through the assistance of our Friends group, and the financial assistance we receive from the Park Fund has allowed us to maintain current staffing and program levels in spite of significant budget cuts. The current Chair of the Friends of Anytown Parks is Janice Peters; she may be reached through the Parks Department at 555-1212, ext. 13. Donations, memorials, contributions, or bequests to the Anytown Park Fund may be made through the Anytown Community Foundation at 1225 Anytown Avenue, Anytown; phone: 555-2121.

Facility Inventory

Anytown has an inventory of eight parks, ranging in size from 0.5 to 25 acres (approximately 48 acres total park land). The Anytown Park system is relatively old, with the newest property having been donated in 1975, and the oldest/largest, Anytown Park,

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donated in 1955. The age of the parks and much of their equipment creates special problems for accessibility, maintenance and development. In many cases, due to limited funds and staffing, features of the parks are in dire need of updating, replacement, or renovation. The following is a brief synopsis of the eight Anytown parks:

- Anytown Park – (donated to the city by Adolphus Rummel in 1955). 25 acres, including Anytown Lake (5 acres), and a branch of Anytown Creek. Features: Rummel House (6 bedroom historic home), 12 year-old wooden playground structure (does not meet CPSC playground safety or ADA accessibility standards), a paved walking trail around the perimeter of the site, One soccer/football field with small bleachers, two baseball/softball fields, benches, several picnic sites, and one 12' x 20' open picnic shelter with tables and a permanent grill.
- North, South, East and West Neighborhood Parks – (purchased or donated between 1962 and 1970). These neighborhood parks average 5 acres; each features a small playground with climbing structure, benches, shade trees, and sidewalk access.
- Northeast, Southeast, and Southwest Mini-Parks – (purchased or donated between 1958 and 1975). These mini parks are less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre; each mini park features open space, some shade trees and sidewalk access. The newest mini-park is Southwest (donated in 1975), which is in a low-lying area approximately two blocks from the Anytown Consolidated School District complex.

Current Programs

Anytown offers a diverse array of programs that attract many different kinds of users. Anytown has responded to the needs of our community by providing traditional programs like youth and adult sports leagues, as well as non-traditional activities (at the request of users). Some of these 'non-traditional' programs include a volunteer-taught Tai Chi Chuan Class, and Raku pottery classes co-sponsored by the Anytown Arts Cooperative. The following is a snapshot of some of the recreation classes and activities that have been offered by APRD staff, volunteers, or with our partners:

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- Boys and Girls Little League Baseball (in cooperation with Little League of Anytown)
- Pop Warner Football (volunteer coached and officiated)
- Boys, Girls, and Teen Soccer (uses Anytown School District facilities)
- Red Cross swimming lessons; senior and adult water aerobics (uses the new Hoosier County hospital indoor therapeutic pool facilities)
- Summer recreation day-camps (in cooperation with the Anytown School District)
- Ice skating on Anytown Lake in winter (ice conditions permitting)
- Tai Chi Chuan exercise classes (taught by volunteers)
- Raku pottery, sculpture, and painting classes for both youth and adult (co-sponsored by the Anytown Arts Cooperative)
- “Summerfest” ice cream social and art festival July 4th of each year (co-sponsored by the Hoosier County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, and the Anytown Chamber of Commerce)
- “Tulip Tree Days” special event each September

Economic affordability – Sliding scales based on household income for fees are in place and operating.

Budget

The APRD has experienced several significant budget cuts from the City in recent years, and anticipates that this may be a continuing trend. This has a direct negative effect on several aspects of our operations and maintenance, including the number of staff hired, level of maintenance performed, replacement of vital equipment, and amount of new programming created. The following table shows the past three years of budget for APRD by three main categories; operations and programming, maintenance, and capital projects.

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Year	Operations and Programming	Maintenance	Capital Projects
2006	\$137,000	\$55,000	Unfunded
2007	\$125,000	\$50,000	Unfunded
2008	\$115,000	\$45,000	Unfunded
2009 (Projected)	\$102,000	\$40,000	Unfunded

Table 1: APRD Budget

Other Recreation Providers

The following is a partial list of other recreation providers in the City of Anytown:

- Hoosier County Hospital – therapeutic pool; some open public hours
- Anytown School District – playgrounds available to public while school not in session; some programs offered in cooperation with the APRD
- Anytown Church – small play area on site open to public use while church not in session; some recreation programs offered during summer months open to public
- Anytown Arts Cooperative – some arts and crafts classes offered; some for free through partnership with the APRD

Natural Features and Landscape

Topography

The topography of Anytown is fairly flat with only a small hilly area in the Northwest corner of the City. There are some low-lying areas that border Anytown Creek, and the creek itself provides the primary drainage for the City as it passes through the town from Northeast to Southwest to the Hoosier River south of town. The topography of Anytown lends itself very well to most kinds of outdoor recreation, especially those that require flat play surfaces; however, there are few hills on public property that would be sufficient for good sledding/tobogganing in winter.

Geology/Soils

The geology of Anytown is based on a Karst limestone bedrock structure, deep and fertile A and B horizons, and a moderate clay composition. The soils in the City vary somewhat from sandy clay loams in the hillier Northwest, to silty clay loams in the bottoms near Anytown Creek. The soils in Anytown do not pose significant problems to construction or development, but care should be taken to prevent large-scale building development of the flood-prone areas surrounding Anytown Creek.

Forest Resources

Anytown enjoys the presence of mature red and white oaks, red maples, and tulip trees that were planted as part of a citywide effort in the 1910's and 20's. They are now magnificent shade trees, especially in the neighborhoods surrounding downtown, Anytown Park, and in the strip bordering Anytown Creek. It would benefit the Anytown Parks to add young trees and shrub plantings to many of the smaller parks, especially those where the largest trees may be approaching or past their prime and need removal in the foreseeable future.

Water Resources

There are only a few surface water resources in Anytown. The City is part of a larger watershed that flows into Anytown Creek. A few small un-named branches, man-made ditches and waterways add to the flow as it passes through the City. The Hoosier River,

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located near Anytown, only impacts the City during 75-year or greater flood events. The following is a snapshot of surface water in Anytown.

- Anytown Lake – 5 acres; stocked lake with fishing access. The lake is beginning to fill in due to silt flowing in from agricultural areas outside the City limits, and excess weed/moss growth due to fertilizers from residential lawns and agriculture upstream (eutrophication). Dredging the lake may be a necessity in the next 20 years. Buffer zones have been planted in the upper reaches of Anytown Creek, and have reduced the amount of silt/nutrients reaching the lake; however, the majority of damage is done and eventually will have to be dealt with.
- Anytown Creek – several branches in the city; moderately buffered by wooded/brushy areas along much of its length in the City limits, much less buffering occurs in the agricultural lands outside the City limits.
- Hoosier River – ½ mile outside the city limits; has only occasional flooding impact on the City (75-year or greater floods). Anytown and Anytown Creek are part of the greater Hoosier River watershed.

Anytown Creek and Lake do provide water attractions for recreation in Anytown. There is potential for greater use of the stream corridor of Anytown Creek for trails and water access; this should be explored before development in the City makes this physically and financially impossible.

Man-made, Historical and Cultural

Transportation Links

Anytown sits astride Indiana State Road 400 (Anytown Avenue), which eventually connects with Interstate 100 approximately 50 miles to the north. Most local traffic uses the country roads and municipal streets for daily travel. There are two railroads that pass within one mile of Anytown; one has a spur that dead-ends in the new Anytown Industrial Park being developed on the east side of town. The Anytown Municipal Airport is a hub for private pilots, local corporations, and several small charter services based in Bigcity,

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approximately 80 miles to the Southeast, and Reallybigcity approximately 40 miles to the Northwest. Residents who need to travel to APRD facilities are generally able to walk, bike, or drive there using City streets without having to access major highways or SR 400.

Industry in Anytown

The Anytown Industrial Park was created as an economic development project for the City in the 1980's when local agriculture and industry were both heavily impacted by the nationwide recession. Development of the industrial park was helped considerably by the addition of a railroad spur into the site. There are now three small factories and assembly plants in the park, and several more are under development. Since several of the factories and plants have hired multiple shifts, there is a growing demand for recreation opportunities in the evenings or at other times of the day outside 'traditional' parks and recreation hours.

Anytown Parks Department History

Anytown started out as a crossroads village near a popular ford over the Hoosier River in the early 1800's. Early settlers stopped here due to the abundant forest for building materials, the nearby river/ford for transportation, the 'oak openings' for grazing, and the presence of the clean, clear Creek that took the name of the growing community. The City of Anytown has grown slowly but steadily from a village of a few dozen souls to the third-class Indiana city of 18,000 we know today. Anytown is known historically as an agriculturally-based town, but has taken on more diverse economics in the last 40 years. Light industry has taken advantage of the inexpensive labor force, low taxes, and available land in and near the city.

The Anytown Parks Department got its start with Adolphus Rummel's 1955 donation of 25 acres of beautifully landscaped, wooded residential property near downtown. The site included the already 100 year-old Rummel House, and the 5-acre stocked pond that we now call Anytown Lake. The Rummel House and its immediate grounds were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990. Rummel was the descendant of one of the original settlers of the village that became Anytown. The APRD celebrates its

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heritage with yearly celebrations, interpretive displays, community projects, and cooperation with the Hoosier County Historical Society.

Anytown Lake and the Hoosier Canal

The Hoosier County Historical Society has records that state that Anytown Lake and Anytown Creek were both part of the water supply system for the former Hoosier Canal system that connected with other regional canals and waterways in the 1830's. There are very few visible signs that the canal was here. Much of the former canal and its support system were reclaimed as agricultural/residential lands by new landowners after the canal went bankrupt and was sold, shortly after the Civil War. The former route of the canal can be best seen through aerial photos shot during winter. Several plaques commemorating the canal and its history are placed at sites throughout Hoosier County.

Cultural Anytown

Anytown has the distinction of having had several significant immigrant populations relocate here. There is a large enclave of people who emigrated from Iceland in the mid-1860's, attracted by the oak savannah ecology of the area for grazing sheep and Icelandic Ponies. Approximately 10 extended families emigrated here from the areas outside Reykjavik, Iceland, beginning in 1864. There also were a number of families that moved to Anytown in the mid 1980's from Laos and Thailand, and are of Hmong descent. These and other immigrant populations contribute to the very diverse nature of the Anytown community. The cultural diversity of Anytown is reflected in the wide variety of crafts, cuisines, and arts that are represented at the city-wide celebrations such as Tulip Tree Days.

Arts

Anytown has always supported a strong artistic community. The City Theatre troupe has offered 'summer stock' plays each season since the 1920's. 'Summer stock' refers to an old small town theatre tradition where the troupe puts on well-known shows (chosen from a pool of previous work), each summer season and re-uses stock scenery and costumes each time. Anytown is also known regionally for having a small 'artist's colony'; which

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uses venues such as the fall 'Tulip Tree Days' festival, and the downtown Anytown Art Gallery to market their creations.

Music

Anytown has a small, all-volunteer City Band that rehearses once per month, and performs at the picnic shelter in Anytown Park during the summer months, the Fourth of July 'Summerfest', and 'Tulip Tree Days'. The citywide festivals also showcase the cultural diversity of Anytown with many styles of music being performed by members of the community in celebration of their ethnic and religious traditions.

Festivals

The two big events during the year in Anytown are the 'Summerfest' which takes place each July 4th in Anytown Park and downtown, and 'Tulip Tree Days', which takes place the second weekend in September of each year. The festivals are increasingly important to the financial health of many non-profit organizations in Anytown as they are able to raise enough funds to be self-sufficient for the following year from the proceeds of fundraiser booths and vending/craft opportunities. The festivals also tie together all the cultural activities of the city.

Social and Economic Factors (from the 2000 US Census)

Population (1990-2000)

- According to the 2000 US Census, Anytown had 18,500 residents.
 - 49% Male, 51% Female
 - Median Age: 39
 - 84% White; 8% Black or African American; 1% American Indian; 4% Asian; 2% Hispanic or Latino; 1% Some other race
 - 17% of population over 5 years of age had a disability

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- 5% of population speaks a language other than English at home
- The 2005 estimated population of Anytown was 18,963 people (2.5% increase).
- The population projection for 2010 is 19,437 (2.5% increase).

Economics in Anytown

- According to the 2000 US Census, Anytown had a 3.0% unemployment rate
- Median household income in 1999 (dollars): \$43,000
- Families below poverty level: 10%
- Largest non-agricultural employment area in Anytown: Manufacturing; Second largest: Retail trade
- Largest Hoosier County employment area: Agriculture

Housing

- Average household size in Anytown: 2.40
- 7901 total housing units
- 20% of all units are vacant
- 63% of owners have a mortgage; 37% do not

Education

- 85% of population High school graduate or higher
- 15% Bachelor's degree or higher

Socio-economic Summary

- Anytown has a higher number of people living in poverty than the national average, but also a higher than average level of education
- Anytown has a higher level of racial diversity than the state averages
- The median age is higher than the state average
- The housing and economic characteristics for Anytown are near statewide averages

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The implication of this data for parks and recreation is that Anytown must consider financial accessibility to their parks and programs, to avoid ‘pricing out’ the 10% of the local population that lives near or below poverty level. Anytown is relatively prosperous with a higher than state average household income, and a lower than state average unemployment level. This prosperity allows Anytown the option of applying additional bonds, taxes, and fees as needed for parks and recreation without undue economic burden to the majority of residents.

Accessibility and Universal Design

Statement of Accessibility for Anytown

“The APRD makes it a part of our mandate to provide reasonable modification under the law for people with disabilities to all of our programs, activities, and services. We strive to provide access for people with physical and mental disabilities. Information on our commitment to accessibility is posted at all of our facilities, online, and at City Hall.”

The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act requires that local governments with over 50 employees designate at least one individual to act as ADA compliance coordinator for the entire government unit. As a best management practice, Anytown Parks and Recreation has designated our own ADA coordinator, Park Superintendent Pat Schmo. Any person or persons who have complaints, grievances or comments related to accessibility may contact Superintendent Schmo [(555) 555-1212 (voice/TT); Anytownparks@anytown.in.us], any staff member of the Anytown Parks and Recreation Department staff, or any member of the Anytown government. All comments will be replied to within five business days.

The APRD contacted the Hoosier County Office on Aging, and the Hoosier Regional Center for Independent Living to help us conduct a new accessibility self-evaluation in May of 2008. The following areas were evaluated and the results are bulleted below:

- Policies: Park Rules and Regulations; Facility Use and Rental Requirements; and the Recreation Activities Program Brochure – compliant with ADA except for

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availability of Braille copies of documents (or alternatives, such as electronic copies or on CD-ROM)

- Estimated cost of compliance: \$0 up to \$1,000, depending on method and quantity of copies
- Recreation Programs and Activities: Youth; Senior; School Cooperation Program; Adult and Family Programs – ADA compliant
- APRD Park System Sites and Facilities – ADA compliant except for: playgrounds and ingress/egress to playgrounds
 - Estimated cost of compliance: \$150,000 *Minimum*
 - Potential funding source: grants; donations

Current Accessibility

Anytown has accessible walkways, shelter houses, picnic areas and restrooms in our parks and facilities. Every activity available in the Anytown parks has been developed to be accessible to as many people as possible through one means or another, except for play on our aging play structures. For Universal Design purposes, Anytown has adopted the policy of purchasing only accessible picnic tables and benches; ADA only requires that 50% of these amenities be accessible. Information about accessibility to programs, services, and facilities, as well as potential accommodations are posted in English and Spanish, (and soon Braille) in conspicuous locations in each building owned and operated by the APRD. Persons that have questions about the posted accessibility information are welcome to call the APRD park staff at: (555) 555-1212 (V/TT) anytime during business hours.

Progress on accessibility issues in Anytown has been hampered over the years by a lack of funding, but some significant improvements have been made. Our newest accessible feature is our fishing dock at Anytown Lake. This dock was universally designed to allow ease of use to the greatest extent possible for all users. Some of the features of this floating fishing dock include:

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- Smooth walkway access; to make it easier to see the route onto the dock, concrete texture and color change at the edge of the dock to indicate transition onto the dock itself
- Notched, accessible railing with highly visible, evenly spaced gaps to allow users to land their fish easily without lifting them over the rail
- Two fully accessible benches (one with a roof) built into the fishing platform for users to rest/fish in the sun or shade
- Fishing rod holders and beverage holders built into the railing so that users do not have to actively hold either item
- A tactile molded plastic map of the lake bottom with Braille text and audio commentary (set into the railing) to illustrate what underwater fishing conditions exist surrounding the dock
- Edge protection built into the base of the perimeter railing for the entire dock
- Texturized artificial surfacing on the dock itself for slip prevention

Proposed Accessibility

Anytown has a strong need to replace our old play structures. They do not meet current Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines, National Playground Safety Institute guidelines, or the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines for Play Areas. The playgrounds need to be updated with age-appropriate play equipment that has safe and accessible surfacing underneath it, and accessible routes to the parking lots and other amenities in our parks. The bare minimum cost estimate for this kind of upgrade is \$150,000. 'Ideal' amenities will cost a great deal more. Funds are expected to come from grants and donations. See the Priorities and Action Schedule later in this plan for a proposed timeline for completion of this facility redesign/redevelopment.

Public Participation

The APRD recognizes our mission of service provision to the community. The best way for us to provide service to the community is to ask what their needs, opinions, and preferences are, and apply that information to all our future planning. For this master

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plan, we used three methods of public input, followed by a final comment period to double-check all our earlier opinion-gathering.

Public Meetings

APRD held two public meetings; neither meeting had high attendance. The meetings were advertised for a week prior to each meeting via newspaper articles and notices (See Appendices), fliers distributed around the community and posted in storefronts, and public service announcements via a local radio station, cable network, and our website. The numbers and response for each meeting were:

- September 15th, 2008, 7:00pm, City Hall – Council Chambers
 - 4 citizens in attendance, plus 3 park board members and 4 city council members
 - Park staff shared the basics of the master plan, and asked for feedback on perceived issues in the parks department using a ‘plus-delta’ system (system positives and needed changes)
 - “Pluses” included: appearance of parks, helpfulness of staff, fun programs
 - “Deltas” (desired changes) included: replacement of deteriorating playground equipment, more programs in summer for kids/families, more play space, ball fields and parks; some neighborhoods have no park space at all, and consider providing more programs for the second and third shift employees from the Anytown Industrial Park

- October 27th, 2008, 7:00pm, Rummel House – main floor
 - 6 citizens in attendance, plus 4 park board members and 1 city council member
 - Park staff shared public comments from last meeting, and plan process so far, asked for feedback (like last meeting)
 - “Pluses” included: programs, park maintenance, and swim/pool classes

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- “Deltas” included: more swim/pool classes or build a city pool, more trees in parks, more programs

Mail Survey

The IDNR requires a random method of gathering public input; therefore, APRD created a short mail survey for random distribution throughout the community. The survey instrument had 23 questions, and covered demographics, park use, programs, barriers to participation, types of park use, and willingness to pay. The survey was advertised in advance through the same methods used to advertise the public meetings, plus survey advertising fliers were sent out to major civic, public, and school groups. (See Appendices - Pg. 32 for a copy of the Survey) The surveys were mailed out October 1st, 2008, and the advertised deadline for return was November 15th. The numbers and summary of responses were:

- There were 247 usable, completed surveys returned out of 1,000 mailed; a 24% response rate
- The average respondent was female, married, 56 or older, had no children living at home, and had a household income between \$22,001 and \$40,000.
- The average respondent used the APRD parks once or twice a month, attended one or two programs per month (and enjoyed it), stated that time was the primary reason they did not recreate more, walked and played with children in the park playgrounds, and were possibly willing to pay for improvements in programs, parks, and services.

Focus Groups

Five focus groups were held in November of 2008 due to the low attendance of the public meetings, and the skewed data from the surveys which did not have adequate representation from senior citizens, parents with young children, and young people of lower socio-economic status. The mail survey questionnaire was used as a structural basis for the group interviews. The numbers and summary of responses were:

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- November 19th, 2008; Anytown YMCA, interviewed group of users:
 - 15 users, ranged in age from 15 to 63, and were regular users of the YMCA and of the APRD parks
 - The group indicated that they liked the parks, and felt that they had fun in them.
 - Desired changes in the parks included: more parks, bigger play structures, a climbing wall or 'bouldering' area, and more youth programs

- November 20th, 2008; Hoosier County Health Dept. – Anytown Office, Single Moms' Support Group:
 - 7 single mothers, children's ages ranged from 1 to 9 years; participant's ages ranged from 17 to 42
 - The group indicated that they didn't use the parks much; cited time as the reason
 - Desired changes in the parks included: better age-appropriate play areas for little kids, before and after-school programs, more summer programs

- November 21st, 2008; Anytown Workforce Development computer training class; Anytown City Hall Annex:
 - 12 people in class; 7 female, 5 male, ages ranged from 19 to 56
 - The group indicated that they did use the parks somewhat, mostly with children or family; liked the parks and programs they used
 - Desired changes in the parks included: more parks, better playgrounds, family-oriented programs and activities (especially on evenings and weekends), and 'programs to keep kids out of trouble' (before and after-school programs)

- November 22nd, 2008; Hoosier County office of accessibility and aging – Anytown site; group of clients:

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- 10 clients of office of accessibility and aging; ages ranged from 25 to 90; 7 of which reported having a disability that significantly affected their daily lives. The group's self-reported disabilities included quadriplegia, paraplegia, blindness, deafness, and debilitating arthritis
- The group indicated that they did use the parks (mostly with friends and family), and that they appreciated the sidewalks/trails and access to the lake
- Desired changes in the parks included: better access to the playgrounds for children/parents with disabilities - sand base is too soft, and trips people who use walkers, and stops wheelchairs; more programs for adults during the day; "more programs for kids"
- November 23rd, 2008; Anytown High School – cross section of students randomly selected by the school guidance counselor and assistant principal:
 - 15 students ranging in age from 14 to 18; representing Freshmen through Seniors
 - The group indicated that they used the parks somewhat, mostly with younger siblings, with groups of friends or for sporting events on the ball fields
 - The students asked for more age appropriate play equipment, they indicated that much of what is currently provided is "kid stuff"
 - Items that were specifically mentioned were a climbing wall or bouldering area, a paintball area, a skatepark, or a shaded or indoor 'teen hangout' with music, places to sit, and possibly food

Public Presentation of Plan

On December 1st 2008, copies of the final draft of the Anytown 5-year Parks and Recreation Master Plan were placed at City Hall, the Municipal Building, the Hoosier County Public Library, the Anytown Consolidated School District offices, and the Anytown Chamber of Commerce. Comment sheets and phone contact information were also available. The plan was also posted on the parks' website with e-mail and phone numbers available for comments. December 20th was the comments submission

Anytown Parks and Recreation Department 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan

deadline. 10 comments were received; 7 written, 2 by phone, and one from the website. The summary of the comments was as follows:

- Love the parks in Anytown (3 comments)
- More frequent trash pick-up in neighborhood parks and mini-parks (2 comments)
- New playground equipment; current equipment in poor shape (2 comments)
- Keep summer kids programs; more in future? (2 comments)
- Love Rummel House and Anytown Lake (one comment)
- Too much tax money spent in parks (one comment)

Summary/Comparison of Public Input

Emerging themes

When each type of public participation method is compared, a set of common themes begins to emerge. The following are the three most common themes (in no particular order):

- Playground renovation/new equipment/accessibility
- More programs; especially family and youth-oriented ('latchkey kid' programs?)
- More parks; space for more open play space, ball fields, etc.

Needs Analysis

What is Issue Analysis?

Since the APRD is developing this master plan in house, we are using a simplified issue analysis method of performing the required needs analysis. This analysis tallied results from each method of public input, the input from the park board and the park staff, and identified common themes from each method and condensed those themes into underlying issues. The issues were placed in a priority order based on financial and other constraints, then turned into a coherent priority and action plan.

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Issues from the Public Input

- Playground renovation/new equipment/accessibility
- More programs; especially family and youth-oriented ('latchkey kid' programs?)
- More parks; space for more open play space, ball fields, etc.

Issues from the Board, Staff and Municipal officers

- Accessibility of facilities, programs and policies: need to upgrade all to current ADA standards.
- Remove and replace outdated/unsafe play equipment
- Add programs strategically for youth, and families
- Lack of funding across the board
- Limited available/affordable new greenspace for parks
- No 'signature' attraction for APRD; consider splashpad or skatepark?

National Standards

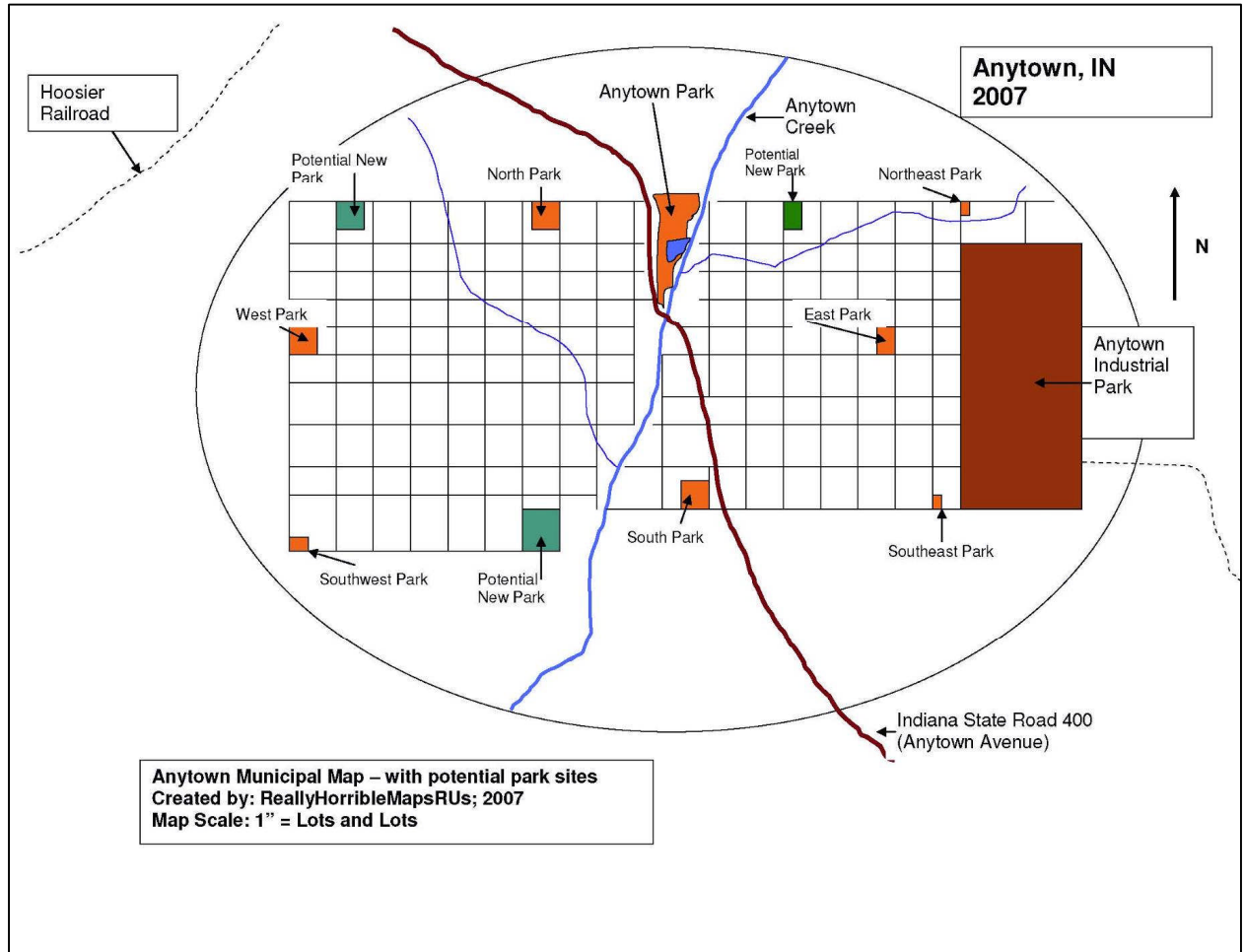
According to the 1983 National Recreation and Park Association's "Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines" by Dr. James Hall and Dr. James Mertes, a city the size of Anytown should have between 6.25 to 10.25 acres of developed open space per 1,000 residents. Since Anytown has approximately 18,000 residents plus approximately another thousand outside the city limits but still in the service area (19,000 total), that suggests a 'recommended' minimum of 118.75 acres of land for outdoor recreation use. Anytown currently has approximately 48 acres of land in its service area. This leaves the APRD with a 70.75 acre deficit in developed open space. As Anytown continues growing, this deficit is likely to become worse unless means can be found to obtain new park land.

What We Need

- Consistent funding
- New and accessible play equipment
- More programs of many kinds
- More parks and park space

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New Facilities Location Map



Priorities and Action Schedule

Setting the priorities for this plan was difficult, as financial constraints are the deciding factor for almost all new development or land acquisition for the Anytown Parks. Capital improvements have been almost non-existent for the last 20+ years in Anytown's parks, except for lands donated or bequeathed to the City.

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Transition into the New Plan

During the transition into the new planning period, the APRD will concentrate on fundraising of all types, with an eye toward increasing the current Anytown Park Fund under the Anytown Community Foundation to a self-sustaining or actively growing level. The duration of this transition period is 14 months, from now until one year into the planning period.

Potential fundraising options during the transition period:

- Municipal bonds
- Sales taxes
- Development impact fees/land donation requirements
- User and entrance fees
- Creative partnerships (with private and public entities)
- Grants (Federal, State, Foundation, Non-profit, etc.)
- Donations
 - In-kind, service, and products
 - Bequests
 - Tax write-offs
 - Corporate donations
- Naming rights
- Product sales (hats, t-shirts, etc.)

Fundraising will be critical; each of the action plan elements depends on having available funds to create it. Citizens of Anytown have provided input into what they want from parks and recreation for the next five years; now it is time to figure out a way to pay for it. One important consideration of the fundraising process is the old truism: “It takes money to make money.” This is particularly true of the grants application process. Most grants have some variety of ‘match’, which requires that the grant recipient provide a required percentage of the total cost of the grant funded project. The Land and Water Conservation Fund for example, provides a 50% reimbursement of the costs of approved

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projects; which means that Anytown must raise in advance the rest of the money for any projects that we wish to build under this grant.

Priorities for 2008 to 2012

- Fundraising drive/transition period (first 12 months of plan period)
- Creation of new programs for families, latchkey kids, and adults, including programs in the evening and on weekends for second and third shift workers and their families
- Removal of all unsafe play equipment; preparation of all play areas for new equipment
- Installation of new, safe, accessible play equipment; using volunteers and donated materials as much as possible
- Development of new multi-purpose/ball fields as funds allow
- Exploration of all available/willing seller potential park properties Citywide
- Purchase/donation/bequest of new parks lands Citywide
- Development of all newly acquired parks for multiple-uses
- Creation of a signature amenity for the APRD
 - Begin a public input process to determine what/where
 - Potential ideas for a signature amenity include a skatepark, a splashpad/water feature, or indoor City pool
 - Price of signature amenities will likely require special fundraising

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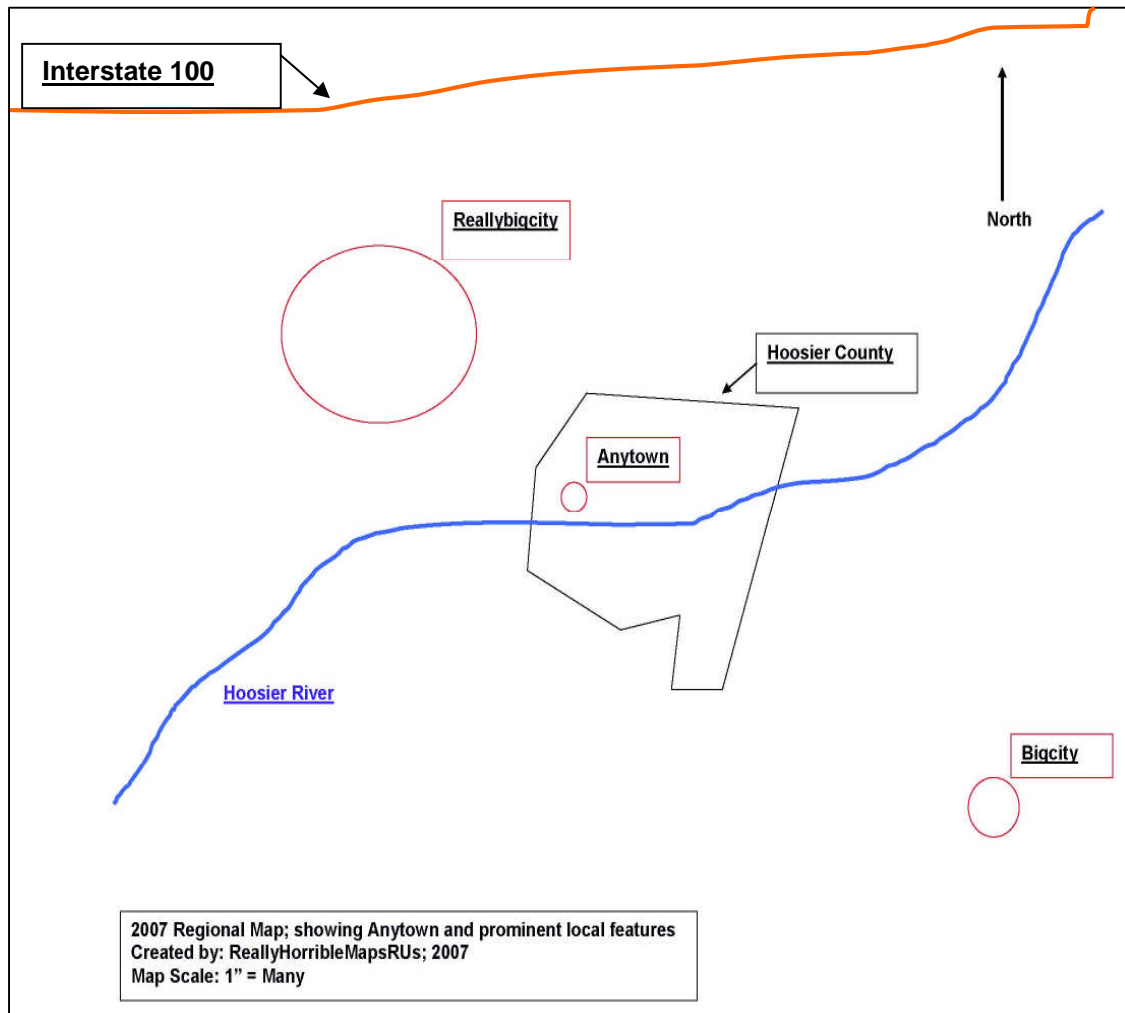
APRD System-wide Action Schedule

Budget Year	Priority Item	Lead Entity	Potential Cost	Potential Funding Source
2008+	Fundraising transition period	Friends of Anytown Parks; Park Board	Estimated cost of fundraising varies; at \ least \$5,000 to \$10,000 for advertising, promotions, staffing, etc.	Donations from community, Board, local businesses; grants; bequests; Lilly Foundation match?
2008+	Exploration-available properties Citywide	Anytown Park Board	Cost can be included somewhat with fundraising; no more than \$5,000	APRD Budget; in-kind donations of time/expertise
2008	Creation of new programs ; latchkey kids, adults, etc.	APRD Recreation Director	Varies based on attendance, type of program, fees charged etc. Approx. \$15,000/yr.	APRD Budget; fees/donations as needed
2008-2008	Remove current play Equipment preparation of play area for new equipment	APRD Park Superintendent; Maintenance Supervisor	Sell all metal equipment for scrap; use proceeds to pay for follow-up costs of removal; final costs approx. \$10,000	APRD Budget; in-kind or service donations from local building contractors?
2008-2009	Installation of new, accessible play equipment; using volunteers and donated materials as much as possible	APRD Maintenance Supervisor; Park Superintendent	Depends on source of equipment, potential for volunteer installation, size of equipment, etc. Costs as high as \$350,000 for two or three medium-sized structures on accessible surfaces	Anytown Park Fund; grants; donations and in-kind; bequests; APRD Budget.
2008-2009	Develop new multi-purpose/ball fields (2-3 fields?)	APRD Park Superintendent; Maintenance Supervisor	Costs depend on number fields and project complexity approximately \$100,000	Anytown Park Fund; grants; donations, etc.
2008-2012	Purchase/donation/bequest new parks lands Citywide Target acres?	Anytown Park Board; Friends of Anytown Parks; Staff	Costs depend on number plots, willing sellers, etc. Costs could range from \$100,000 to \$1,000,000	Anytown Park Fund; donations; bequests
2009-2012	Development of all Newly acquired parks for multiple-uses	APRD Park Superintendent; Maintenance Supervisor	Costs depend on number to develop & amenities costs could range from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000	Anytown Park Fund; grants; donations and in-kind; bequests; etc.
2010-2012	Signature amenities for larger parks, such as a splashpad or skatepark	Anytown Park Board, Friends of Anytown Parks; Superintendent	Costs depend on size/ complexity of design of amenities; could range from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000	Anytown Park Fund; grants; donations and in-kind; bequests; etc.

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Appendices

Anytown Regional Map



**Anytown Parks and Recreation Department
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Section 504 Compliance Form

ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE
SECTION 504
OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

The Anytown Parks and Recreation Board (Applicant) has received and read the guidelines for compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 issued by the United State Department of the Interior and will comply with these guidelines and the ACT.

SIGNATURE *JANE DOE*
APPLICANT PRESIDENT

(President's printed name)

SIGNATURE *JOHN ROE*
APPLICANT SECRETARY
(Secretary's printed name)

DATE February 20, 2008

**Anytown Parks and Recreation Department
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Board Resolution Adopting Plan

WHEREAS, the Anytown Park and Recreation Board is aware of the parks and recreation needs of the residents of Anytown Indiana, and

WHEREAS, the Board realizes the importance of sound planning in order to meet the needs of its citizens,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE ANYTOWN PARK AND RECREATION BOARD, by unanimous declaration, does adopt the Anytown 5-year Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan as its official plan for the next five years, for the growth and development of parks and recreational opportunities in Anytown .

Passed and signed this 20th day of February , 2008 .

ATTEST:

JANE DOE

President

Wesley Thiel

Town Attorney

**Anytown Parks and Recreation Department
5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan**



**Anytown Parks and
Recreation Department**

5555 Anytown Avenue
Anytown, IN 44444
(555) 555-1212

2008 APRD Public Survey

Please take a moment to help us improve your experiences in the Anytown Parks. When you're done, please mail the questionnaire back using the self-addressed stamped envelope provided or bring it by City Hall or the Parks Office. The results of this survey will be added to the information being gathered for the 2008-2012 APRD 5-year Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and will help guide our decision making for the next five years.

All results gathered in this survey will be anonymous and all information is completely confidential. No information from these surveys will be used for any purpose other than park planning.

Park Use

How often do you use the Anytown Parks? How would you rate our parks?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Every day | <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent high quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 or 5 times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Generally good |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 or fewer times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality varies from park to park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once or twice a month | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once or twice a year | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never | |

What do you typically do in the Parks?

- ☐ Use playgrounds
- ☐ Walk/jog/run
- ☐ Go fishing
- ☐ Relax
- ☐ Use sports fields
- ☐ Picnicking
- ☐ Ice skating
- ☐ Other _____

Please select the people that you most often use the park with:

- ☐ Family/children/grandchildren
- ☐ Friends
- ☐ Varies on each visit
- ☐ Just myself

Programs and Activities

How often do you use our programs or activities?

- ☐ Every day
- ☐ 4 or 5 times a week
- ☐ 3 or fewer times a week
- ☐ Once or twice a month
- ☐ Once or twice a year
- ☐ Never

If you attend any of our programs, who do you most often attend programs with?

- ☐ Family/children/grandchildren
- ☐ Friends
- ☐ Varies on each visit
- ☐ Just myself

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How would you rate our programs or activities?

- ☐ Consistent high quality
- ☐ Generally good
- ☐ Quality varies from program to program
- ☐ Poor quality

Were the programs fun and well organized?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ A little
- ☐ No

Participation

Is there anything that prevents or restricts your use of the parks?

- ☐ Yes: if so, what? _____
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't use parks

Do any of these physical barriers restrict or prevent your using the parks or programs?

- ☐ Physical access to the park or its equipment
- ☐ Lack of accessible parking
- ☐ Parks too far away
- ☐ Other _____

What is the single most important thing that prevents you from using the parks or programs more?

- ☐ Lack of time
- ☐ Poor health/mobility
- ☐ Can't afford the programs
- ☐ Lack of interest/don't want to
- ☐ Other _____

I would like to see the APRD add the following things (check all that apply):

- ☐ More accessible play equipment
- ☐ More walking trails/paths
- ☐ More benches/shelters/gathering areas
- ☐ More youth programs/activities?
What? _____
- ☐ More adult programs/activities?
What? _____
- ☐ New, large amenity: such as a Splashpark or a skatepark

Park Funding

Would you like Anytown to invest more money in the parks?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ Depends on the investment
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't use parks

How would you like Anytown to pay for new amenities in the parks?

- ☐ Use existing budget
- ☐ Municipal Bonds
- ☐ New taxes/fees
- ☐ Donations
- ☐ Grants
- ☐ All the above

Are you willing to pay new taxes or user fees to help pay for improvements in the Anytown parks?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ Depends on the improvements
- ☐ No

Are you willing to pay for improvements in the Anytown parks using any of the following methods? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, small increase in program fees
- ☐ Yes, small increase in shelter reservation
- ☐ Yes, small yearly city park user tax
- ☐ No, can't afford to pay anything for parks
- ☐ No, unwilling to pay anything for parks

**Anytown Parks and Recreation Department
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If I could change one thing about the Anytown Parks, it would be: (please write in your answer)

About You (Optional)

What is your approximate age?

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 19 - 25
- ☐ 26 - 35
- ☐ 36 - 45
- ☐ 46 - 55
- ☐ 56 - 65
- ☐ Over 65

What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

What is your living arrangement?

- ☐ Single
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Domestic partner/significant other
- ☐ Roommate

What is the number of children living in your household?

- ☐ None
- ☐ One child
- ☐ Two to three children
- ☐ Four or more children

What are their ages? _____

What is your employment status?

- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Employed full-time

What is your approximate household income?

- ☐ Under \$20,000/year
- ☐ \$20,001 to \$40,000
- ☐ \$40,001 to \$60,000
- ☐ \$60,001 to 80,000
- ☐ Over \$80,000/year
- ☐ No answer

If you are employed, what shift do you normally work?

- ☐ Days
- ☐ 2nd/early evening
- ☐ 3rd/late evening/graveyard
- ☐ Rotating/swing
- ☐ Other _____

Do you and your household:

- ☐ Rent your home?
- ☐ Own your home?
- ☐ Lease a condo/apartment?
- ☐ Live with others/relatives?
- ☐ Other? _____

Thank you for your participation!

**Anytown Parks and Recreation Department
5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan**

Newspaper notices, articles, sign-in sheets and meeting info

Newspaper articles

Anytown Reporter; "Parks Want Your Opinion!" September 5th, 2008 (copy of article included here)

Anytown Reporter; "Park Survey Coming Soon" October 15th, 2008 (copy of article included here)

Newspaper meeting notices

Anytown Reporter; "Community Meetings and Notices"; September 10th, 2008 (copy of Notice included here)

Anytown Reporter; "Community Meetings and Notices"; October 24th, 2008 (copy of Notice included here)

Sign-in sheets and agendas for meetings (by date)

Sign-in Sheet for September 15th Meeting (copy of sign-in sheet included here)

Sign-in Sheet for October 27th Meeting (copy of sign-in sheet included here)

Text of free cable TV info spot/PSA

- Public Service Announcement: run on local cable information channel "Community Calendar" ticker 25x daily for 1 week prior to each public meeting. "Make your voice heard! The Anytown Parks Department wants to know what you want for the future of YOUR parks – facilities, locations, programs. You name it we hear it! Attend the Anytown Parks Department Public Meeting on at the (Time, Date, Location)"

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Text of free radio info spot/PSA

- Public Service Announcement runs on local AM/FM station “Anytown Hits – WWWW FM 109.9” 4x daily during morning and evening drive times. “Hi! I’m Mayor Taylor Tarry, and the Anytown Parks and Recreation Department needs your feedback to this question! What can we do to improve YOUR park? Please come to the Anytown Parks Department Public Meeting at the (Time, Date, Location). We want to know what you think!”

Text of insert for City utility bills

- “Help the Anytown Parks Department improve YOUR parks! We need your input into the Anytown 5-year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Please attend the public meeting at (Time, Date, Location) to share your ideas, opinions and concerns. We want to hear from you!” 5x7 brightly colored paper insert into City utility bill envelope.